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In this issue:

A Letter to Uncle Ho

(from members of President
HO CHI MINH's personal staff)



★
President
HO CHI MINH
and the
POLITICAL BUREAU
during the
DIEN BIEN PHU
campaign
★

Nixon Troop Withdrawal Plan, an Unworkable Trick

THE Nixon administration is trumpeting its "desire" to end the Viet Nam war. On September 15, before the UN General Assembly, the US President declared that the United States had been exerting great efforts and that it was up to the other side to respond to it.

In all its propaganda stunt, the US has focused on the "troop withdrawal plan", calling it a notable step to the door to peace. This play was inaugurated on May 11, 1969 when Nixon proposed to pull out a major part of US and satellite forces within 12 months. On June 9, Nixon declared at Midway that the first batch of 25,000 US troops will be taken out of South Viet Nam by late August 1969, and on September 16, he announced the withdrawal of 35,000 additional troops, that is 60,000 would be withdrawn before December 31, 1969.

The Nixon-type troop withdrawal does not in the least prove US "goodwill." All US propaganda has failed in gaining for it significant support at the United Nations meeting and in deceiving the public in the United States.

The Nixon administration has failed in its manoeuvre to cover up its criminal continuation of the aggressive war in Viet Nam, and to put the blame on the DRVN Government and the Republic of South Viet Nam Provisional Revolutionary Government for the marking time of the Paris Conference.

THE withdrawal of US troops is certainly a fundamental question in the settlement of the Viet Nam issue. As it has committed troops to an aggression against Viet Nam, the US must pull them out quickly, totally and unconditionally. This is a simple demand that any sensible man would raise. But to withdraw troops in the manner of Nixon is not a demonstration of the desire to end the war; instead it is a transparent move to whitewash its criminal war intensification. In fact, the US still keeps over half a million troops in Viet Nam and, during his 8 months in office, Nixon has been stepping up the war, increasing the rate of B-52 bombings and terror raids to the highest level ever and pursuing chemical warfare and piling up

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South Viet Nam

- ◎ A Big "Sweep" Beaten Off in Ben Tre Province: 500 Enemy Casualties, 11 Choppers Downed.
- ◎ 48 Military Vehicles and Hundreds of Adverse Troops Put out of Action in Two PLAF Ambushes, One Southeast of Saigon.
- ◎ Two US Encampments Northwest of Saigon and South of 17th Parallel Stormed: 230 GIs and 33 Military Vehicles Knocked Out.
- ◎ Over One Hundred Targets Hit by PLAF Artillery and Infantry (Oct. 5, 6 and 7).

Mr. Ha Van Lau: Mr. Nixon Has Shown Utter Contempt for Public Opinion

At the 37th session of the Paris Conference, Ambassador Ha Van Lau, the DRVN representative, strongly flayed US designs to prolong the war in Viet Nam.

Analyzing Nixon's plan for "de-Americanization" or "Vietnamization" of the war, and his "three conditions for US troop withdrawal", his refusal to set a time-limit for the total withdrawal of US troops from South Viet Nam, Ambassador Ha Van Lau pointed out: In fact, the Nixon administration still wants to prolong the occupation of South Viet Nam by US troops to impose US neo-colonialism there.

He then recalled statements by leaders of the student movement in the United States that the peace movement withdrew by the Nixon administration only aim to deceive and appease public opinion in the United States. He emphasized that the Vietnamese people were demanding was actually what the American people had been pressing for in their past and present campaigns, although the Nixon administration, like the Johnson administration in the past, was resorting to every means to appease them or to repress their action. They urge that the US government withdraw quickly and totally the US troops and troops of the other foreign countries in the US camp from South Viet Nam without laying down any conditions whatsoever, bring back American boys and servicemen from Viet Nam "alive" and not "rotten", totally and not partly, rapidly, and not dragglingly.

Criticizing Nixon's September 26 statement that "What is not negotiable is the right of the people of South Viet Nam to choose their own leaders without outside imposition, either by us or by anybody else", Mr. Ha Van Lau said:

It is known to everyone that since 1954, there has not been any administration in South Viet Nam, from Ngo Dinh Diem to Thieu Ky-Khiem, that was not a US creation fathered and fostered by the US to carry out US neo-type colonialism in South Viet Nam. Mr. Ha Van Lau quoted the report of the congressional conference on the military budget and national priorities made in Washington at the end of

last March, bearing the signatures of 45 well-known US senators and representatives and many reputed scholars and experts of the US, as saying: "We will have to recall that it was the US which, in contravention of the Geneva Accords, helped create and sustain a separate South Vietnamese state and choose the leadership of that state."

Mr. Ha Van Lau pointed out:

"What Mr. Nixon tries to achieve under the label of the right of the people of South Viet Nam to choose their own leaders" is precisely to sustain the military, political and corrupt Thieu Ky-Khiem puppet administration as an instrument to implement US neo-colonialism in South Viet Nam."

He added that broad sections of world and American public opinion had supported the fair and reasonable proposal of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam for the formation of a provisional coalition government and for entrusting it with the organization of general elections throughout South Viet Nam.

Mr. Ha Van Lau said that Nixon not only was clinging to his aggressive stance but also trying to spread the belief that "the US has made a far-reaching and comprehensive peace offer" and that "now is the time for Hanoi to make the next move." Nixon also showed his contempt for public opinion when he bluntly said that the anti-war movement, however vigorous and legitimate, would have no influence on his policy.

Mr. Ha Van Lau pointed out: "The Vietnamese people aspire to nothing but genuine independence, freedom and peace, and want to live in friendship with all the other peoples in the world, including the American people. The demands put forward by the DRVN Government and the PRG of the RSVN which Nixon has repeatedly termed 'rigid' are precisely what the American people are eagerly expecting from Nixon because they meet the legitimate interests of the US."

barbarous crimes against the South Vietnamese people. One wonders when can the war be brought to an end if the aggressor troops are pulled out by dribbles, at the rate of sixty thousand men in 6 months? As Senator F. Church remarked on October 8, with the present token scale of withdrawal, American troops would be engaged in Viet Nam for the next 8 to 10 years.

In his May 14, 1969 speech Nixon made a vague declaration that he would bring home a large part of US and satellite troops within 12 months, but remained silent about what he would do later. He has hitherto refrained from fixing a timetable for the total and quick withdrawal of troops. On June 10, Nixon recalled his three "criteria" for the total troop pull-out, namely:

First, "an increase in South Vietnamese army's military potential." This is sheer illusion, in the view of even US military officials.

Secondly, "a reduction of enemy activity." This is also downright absurdity because it means the US wants the Vietnamese people to scale down their fight against aggression while it is intensifying the war.

Thirdly, "Progress in the Paris talks." This is another piece of nonsense because it is the US which has driven the Paris Conference into a stalemate by sticking to its aggressive and neo-colonialist stance and obdurate attitude.

The US is persistently pressing for its utterly absurd claim for "mutual withdrawal" and "reciprocity" which has been categorically rejected by the Vietnamese people and strongly condemned by the progressive public opinion in the US and in the world, because it puts on a par the aggressor and the one who resists aggression, and asks for a reward for aggression.

To withdraw troops in the Nixon fashion is a scheme to dodge a prompt, total and unconditional withdrawal of troops, it is but a deployment of forces, a trick to go on with the aggressive war in a new form through "de-Americanization" or "Vietnamization."

Nixon Troop Withdrawal Plan, an Unworkable Trick

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In essence, the US is plotting to replace US troops by puppet troops, force on the latter the burden of the war while maintaining a major part of its own troops in South Viet Nam to serve as a prop for the Saigon puppet regime.

As a matter of fact, the US Defence Secretary declared that the US wanted to "end the war in Viet Nam without abandoning our basic objective" and to give the puppet army "more and more responsibility" in all respects of the war.

The American magazine *Newsweek* on September 8 revealed a plan of the US Defence Department to keep in South Viet Nam 250,000 men till 1972 or even later. According to another plan mentioned by the American press in June 1969, half of these 250,000 men would serve as strategic reserve force, and the other half, a special force, to lend a hand to the puppet army. The *New York Times* said on October 6 that American public opinion was increasingly worried that under the pretext of Vietnamese conflict, the Nixon administration would maintain 100,000 US troops in Viet Nam for ever.

NIXON'S "troop pull-out plan" is after all a trick aimed at mollifying public opinion and furthering the dirty political interests of the US aggressor. Each time public pressure reached a high point, Nixon ordered a niggardly troop pull-out, and nothing more. Senator Fulbright, Chairman of the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee, said on September 23 that Nixon's "draft reform pronouncements and his decision to withdraw 35,000 more troops from Viet Nam amounted to a nice opiate designed to quiet dissent." The *US News and World Report* on September 27 gave two reasons for Nixon's concern with the war in Viet Nam: election and public opinion.

USIS on September 24 quoted Scott, Republican leader in the Senate, as saying that to "insure Republican gains in the 1970 elections, Nixon will not end but must substantially reduce American involvement in Viet Nam." *Newsweek* wrote on September 29 that the bomb of public opinion might be

defused by withdrawing 10,000 troops each month and no more after the 1972 presidential elections, and the remaining 350,000 will have to stay.

One thing is clear: Nixon's attempt to create a "safety valve" by withdrawing troops piecemeal to relieve pressure at home has failed. The American people's movement for an immediate end to the US aggressive war in Viet Nam is surging to new heights.

Nixon has also failed to hurl back the waves of protest in the Congress. The "grace period" was already over. In mid-September, Senators Goodell (Republican) and Lowenstein (Democrat) who had started a "dump President Johnson" movement declared their readiness to move into high gear in a "similar campaign to complete US withdrawal by the end of 1970." Fulbright declared that "public sessions" would start in late October to help Nixon find "a way out of the Viet Nam morass."

The just position and the sound, fair and reasonable policy of the Vietnamese people as expounded in the four points of the DRVN Government and the ten-point overall solution of the South Viet Nam NLF and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam have been enjoying firm support from the world peoples and American progressives.

The aggressive, colonialist stance and the stubborn attitude of the Nixon administration has been under searing fire. By blindly treading in the steps of Johnson, Nixon will surely meet with ignominious failure.

As pointed out by the DRVN Government and the September 21, 1969 statement of the DRVN Government and the September 20, 1969 statement of the RSVN PKG, as long as the US pursues its aggression in Viet Nam, refuses to withdraw its troops from South Viet Nam totally and without conditions, and clings to the Thieu Ky-Khiem puppet administration, the Vietnamese people, carrying out the sacred last directions of President Ho Chi Minh, and united as one man, are resolved to face all sacrifices and hardships, and fight on till their fundamental national rights are achieved.

A Letter to Uncle Ho

(From Members of the President's Personal Staff)

October 3, 1969

Dear Uncle,

SINCE you are gone, we have been counting each day. Just one month has passed! How quick time flies, dear Uncle, and it wrings the heart of everyone of us to think that this time you are away far longer, for you left without telling when you would return.

You went, leaving oodles of love to everyone...

Your recommendations, how thoughtful and complete they are! Each time we read your last message, we feel as though we were hearing your voice making recommendations, and giving advice to us. We shake with tears but also feel proud of you!

Dear Uncle, you wanted us not to be taken by surprise, but how sudden your passing away was! The whole country mourned for you. sorrow and regret swept the grey oceans and the five continents. Many said even heaven wept! (It rained heavily those days. — Ed.)

As for us, the more we miss you, the harder and better we work so as to be worthy of your thoughtfulness. The house you lived in and even the paths you walked on, we still keep them neat and clean. But, dear Uncle Ho, this is not to welcome you home as we used to in the past when you were absent; this is to welcome the people and cadres, especially the comrades and people from the South whom you often thought of, on their visit to your house when the country is reunified... and it is certain that our friends from abroad, too, like to visit it.

We miss you very much, Uncle. We remember that, though advanced in years, you worked all day, unwilling to relax. We remember the time of your meals. We remember the times when you strolled in the garden with the serenity of a fairy in a tale.

Please, Uncle, allow us to reminisce on one of your work days.

Dear Uncle, when you were still at home, one would hear at 5:30 a.m. the radio you were listening to in the bedroom of the small wooden house. Each time you heard the news on good people and good deeds, you always told us to look the bulletin for you to check and send badges to those who had been commended.

You went downstairs (President Ho Chi Minh used to live in a small house on piles near the Presidential Palace. — Ed.) to do the morning drill. Seeing you perform the movements of a traditional boxing exercise, we were filled with joy and were sure you would live many more years.

Your breakfast was simple. Sometimes you would have a bit of bread and a little jam, sometimes a bowl of rice soup with sugar. Dear Uncle, since you departed, the cook and table attendants always wait for you with scant eyes when comes the time for your meals.

As a rule, 7 a.m. was the time you began to work with cadres or to receive guests. It was tiring for you, we thought. But you told us that with such early appointments you would have plenty of time afterwards for other businesses.

When you wanted some department to report progress, you would without delay ask the comrades directly responsible for it to come and would talk with them in a very concrete and practical way.

When it was cold you would remind people everywhere to look after the old and the children.

remind the co-ops to feed and tend buffaloes and oxen well. When it was below 10 degrees C, you would remind the teachers to allow the children to stay at home... When it was hot, you would remind people to bring refreshments to the anti-aircraft gunners... You showed great concern about the consolidation of the Party branches, the full exercise of democracy, and the constitutions of the co-ops. Coal mining, too, was an object of your constant attention. Harvesting of rice crops, combating of typhoons and floods, tree planting and afforestation, digging of air-raid shelters and trenches, all these tasks you always urged people in time to do well... Lastly, you paid keen attention to the "good people, good deeds" movement.

After interviews with cadres or guests, you would spend the rest of the morning reading or hearing digests of documents, newspapers, bulletins. When some idea occurred to you, you would jot it down in your note-book so that you would at meetings tell people of it or check upon it. First of all, you would read the Party's newspaper and would tell comrade Hoang Tung (Nhan Dan's Editor-in-Chief. — Ed.) immediately to learn lessons from shortcomings, if any. It was you who told the newspapers not to forget to insert the paragraph: "We welcome all criticisms by our readers!" right on the frontpage.

You also read local newspapers and papers of various branches. You would look through them very quickly without missing any interesting detail. You had quite a flair with news reports from the South and the world. When reading local newspapers and papers of various branches you never failed to praise achievements and remind them to correct mistakes.

Before lunch as well as dinner, you would walk some hundred metres. Your meals were

very fragrant. You were fond of ca kho (fish stewed in fish sauce — Ed.) flavoured with ginger leaves. From time to time, people offered you bean sauce from Nam Dan (President Ho's native district — Ed.) or dried fish from Dong Hoi (capital of Quang Binh province — Ed.). You always showed great temperance. Sometimes when the cadres came to have meals with you, they were surprised to see you eat with appetite.

At noon, you would have about an hour's nap. Then you would resume work, taking notes or writing papers. In the afternoon, cadres from the Party Central Committee often came to report to you for about an hour.

After dinner, you would again read books or newspapers. You said it was your habit and reading was the kind of recreation that suited you best!

At night, you read books and listened to the radio till half past ten when you switched off the light.

In the last few years, when not very busy with work, you would go to the Political Bureau. And in spare time, when documentary films were available, you would spend about an hour seeing them on Saturday evenings.

JUST one month has elapsed, Uncle, and you have not come back. But we wish to report to you that your house and your garden continue to be kept the way you always wanted them to be.

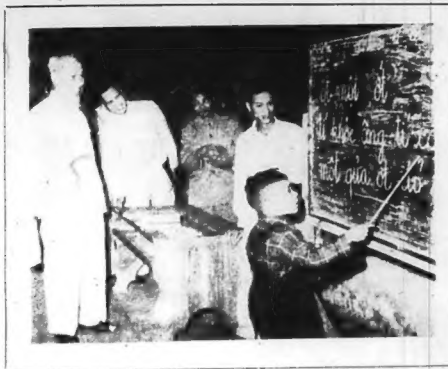
Emulating other branches in carrying out your ultimate instructions, we pledge ourselves to be a hundred per cent efficient.

You will live for ever with our mountains, our rivers, our Fatherland, and will for ever remain the pride of the entire Vietnamese nation which is successfully resisting the US imperialist aggressors.

Respectfully yours,
NGUYEN KIM
and all the other comrades of
your personal suite



UNCLE HO'S dwelling house near the Presidential Palace in Hanoi



AS the aim of education is to train men and women who will continue the great revolutionary work of our Party and people, all government departments, Party organizations and regional administrations at all levels must pay even greater attention to it, show more solicitude for the schools in every respect, and help forward education.

(Excerpt from President Ho Chi Minh's October 15, 1968 Message to cadres, teachers, workers, employers, pupils and students in infant schools, general education schools, complementary education classes, secondary vocational schools, colleges and universities on the opening of the 1968-1969 school year)

President Ho Chi Minh visiting a pre-school class in Hanoi

15th Anniversary of Hanoi Liberation
(Oct. 10, 1969)

Hanoi Fifteen Years After Liberation

• In fifteen years, the building area has doubled compared with eighty years under colonial rule.
• In 1964, the total value of industrial output rose ten times over the colonial period. Since 1965, during the US war of destruction against the DRVN, the yearly increase was maintained at 12.5 per cent.

• In suburban districts, 85 per cent of farm land have been irrigated. In 1967, the annual rice output grew to 5.17 tons per hectare (for two crops yearly) as against 1.3 tons for one crop yearly under the old regime. 96.6 per cent of peasant households have joined agricultural co-operatives now all at high-level.

• In 1964 the volume of retail trade (State sector) increased 20 times compared with liberation time.

• Compared with the 1955-1956 school-year, in 1967-1968, enrolment in infant classes went up over 3 times, that of general education schools over 3 times and that of higher education establishments 33 times. Besides, each year 80,000 grown-up attend complementary classes.

• Between 1958 and 1969, for each inhabitant 30 books on the average were printed.

• Compared with 1956, the number of medical establishments and hospital beds has upped 5 times and that of medicine doctors and assistant doctors 17 times.

• Each inhabitant attends ten theatrical performances a year on the average.

• Up to October 10, 1969, the Hanoi armed forces and people downed 265 US predatory planes.

CAM BINH: A Pearl in DRVN Education

by HO THUC
Vice-Minister of Education

THE PAST AND THE PRESENT

CAM BINH is a village in Cam Xuyen district, Ha Tinh province. Before the August Revolution (1945) the people led a miserable life under French rule: 64 households (one-ninth of the total in the village) lived on begging. Many people left their barren lands and went away to hire themselves out as rubber plantation "coolies" or coal miners, never to be heard of again in most cases. In the early 1945 famine, 354 starved to death.

Hunger, ignorance, and social evils held the village people in an iron vice. Of the 3,000-old villagers only 17 knew how to read and write. At present, the Cam Binh people have enough food and have wiped out illiteracy. Rice output, although not yet very high in absolute terms, has doubled tenfold compared with French colonial times. Over half the cultivated area is tractor-ploughed and harrowed. Eight years ago, the State still had to supply Cam Binh with 28 tons of rice a year; now, the village is able not only to meet its own needs but also to sell to tons of rice to the State every year. Formerly the people shared with their cattle tumbledown shacks; now, all boast new wooden houses with beds, mats, blankets, mosquito-nets, and the cattle are kept in separate sheds.

Socialist morals and an orderly way of life prevail in the village. A mass literary and artistic movement is in full swing. The above-described changes in the Cam Binh people's

material and spiritual life are due to socialist education. Over the past years, though the American aggressors attacked the village on less than 220 times, dropping nearly 50,000 tons of bombs, yet 6% of the villagers never stopped going to school. One-fourth of a century ago, 98% of them were illiterate; such a shameful state of things has been a thing of the past since long. All villagers have gone through primary education and are now attending secondary school (6th to 10th classes).

General education, complementary evening classes and infant classes are developing at a steady and well-balanced rate. Cam Binh ranks first in North Viet Nam for all-aged education.

THE PEOPLE

A visitor to Cam Binh will be told many interesting stories. Former one-crop and low-yield fields are now under many foodplants — rice, sweet potatoes, groundnuts, beans, etc. — and have achieved high productivity, making available many tons of each kind for the State every year; there has been an emigration movement for looking after the co-ops' buffaloes well, an association has been founded with a view to encouraging thrift and savings, and so on. But what may interest the visitor most is the people themselves: the people of Cam Binh, the new rural people of socialist Viet Nam, the products of our education.

The visitor will first notice the schoolchildren, sound of body and mind, modest and polite, loving their native land and determined to make it ever

more prosperous and beautiful. Their love of the socialist regime and Uncle Ho, their hatred of the American aggressors are shown in their will to study and learn and to help their parents and their co-operatives. An emulation drive has been launched among them for "a thousand good deeds". They have set up "Young Shocks" — co-ops and clubs, which they run themselves. Hygiene, discipline, self-discipline and optimism are encouraged.

Young men and women will commend the visitor's interest with their love of study and their resolve to overcome all obstacles to perform any task that may be assigned to them by the community. Many examples have been carried through every one of her duties and has so far three times donated blood.

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"The 'Thousand Good Deeds' and 'Young Shock Co-op' movement has been started by the Young Pioneers. Its aim is to encourage the children to perform good deeds in accordance with Uncle Ho's precepts: 'Love your country and compatriots; study well and work well; unite and observe discipline; observe good hygiene; to modest, honest, and courageous.'"

"The visitor will first notice the schoolchildren, sound of body and mind, modest and polite, loving their native land and determined to make it ever

1,400 Women Jailed in Thu Duc Prison Put to Savage Torture and Beating: Many Fatalities and Many Maimed for Life

— Special Communiqué of the Committee to Denounce
US-Puppets' War Crimes in South Viet Nam —

THE Thu Duc prison, 12km from Saigon, is a real hell on earth. The more than 1,400 women illegally detained there have to live in crowded wards, in hunger and thirst, and without medical care, and are frequently put to torture in torture chambers and right in their wards.

On orders from US bosses, the puppet administration, from the Diem-Nhu brothers formerly to the Thieu-Ky-Khiem clique at present, has tried to brainwash political prisoners through "denunciation of communism" courses and the salute to the Saigon flag. Their aim has been to terrorize the recalcitrants and force the others to give up their patriotic ideal.

The same methods have been applied in the Thu Duc prison, and have met with a stiff resistance from the women prisoners. In retaliation, the jailers have been putting them to utterly savage torture.

Following many previous bloody waves of repression, the enemy in July this year started another terror campaign against the female inmates, specially those who were against the "denunciation of communism" courses and the salute to the Saigon flag. They resorted to such barbaric methods as stuffing their mouths and eyes with caustic lime, breaking their teeth, slashing their faces, pushing skewers into their genitals, or throttling them to death.

Many who were inflicted the lime torture or beatings lost consciousness and later became disabled for life, such as Misses Tran Thi Nga, Nguyen Thi Cam, Nguyen Thi Canh, Nguyen Thi Hue, and Miss Ty.

Among those receiving blows and kicks in their sexual organs in addition to the above-said treatment were Tran Thi Lien, Pham Thi Bach Tuyet, Ho Thi Ut, Nguyen Thi Lai, Quach Kim Anh, Tran Thi Hong Loan, Nguyen Thi Hanh, Pham Thi Mai, Nguyen Thi Nhan, Nguyen Thi Hien and Pham Thi Duc.

The torturers thrust sticks into the privy parts of Miss Le Thi Cam (a student), broke the teeth of Miss Nguyen Thi Bay (a teacher) and slashed the faces of To Thi Tam and Nguyen Thi Bich.

On August 16, Tran Thi Binh, 18, was stripped naked and ordered to parade before her torturers. Then the latter tied her hair to her own nipples and pulled her hair with all their strength. Then she was laid on the ground. Gao and Ngon, two of the jailers, forced her legs apart and captain Duong Ngoc Minh, the chief warder, savaged her genitals with a sharp-edged stick. After that, the others turned in raving her till she fainted.

The same day, ten of the inmates Tran Kim Cam, Trinh Hong Quan, Vo Thi Anh, Nguyen Thi Lan, Nguyen

Thi Tho, Vo Thi Ut, Tran Thi Vien, Nguyen Thi An, Nguyen Thi Hoa and Nguyen Thi Hong were interrogated, handcuffed and thrown into separate cells. The prisoners went on a hunger strike, which was immediately supported by all other female prisoners in the camp who started a general sympathetic action.

On August 21, the enemy summoned many of the strikers to the warden's office, where they beat them up savagely. As a result of many days of ordeal, Nguyen Thi Tan and Dang Thi Ranh died that very night. (Nguyen Thi Tan, 23, had been arrested on May 25, 1968 at the Ba Hoa post; Dang Thi Ranh, a girl of 16 in Binh Phuoc village, Thu Duc district, had been sentenced to one year of suspended imprisonment although no evidence could be produced to support the charge against her.)

As the other prisoners did not let them take away the two bodies, the enemy dealt even more savage beatings. Khong Que Kim, 21, a Chinese resident, was killed on the spot. Many other women were seriously injured. More cruel still, the chief warden ordered his men to take off the clothes of Nguyen Thi Tan, and he himself trampled on her body and face in order to intimidate the remaining women.

The most seriously wounded were then taken to unknown destination, among them Vo Thi Lan (16), Nguyen Thi Cam (17), Tran Kim Cam (17) — arrested on May 5, 1968 in Saigon, and transferred to Thu Duc on November 30, same year, Vo Thi Anh (18), Huynh Thi Ngoc (16), Trinh Hong Quan (16), Lam Ngon (23), a Chinese national — arrested on May 5, 1968, and Ly Qui Chi (30).

Infuriated by such atrocities, all the women prisoners rose up to defend their own life. They demanded that the enemy stop the beatings and terror, abolish the harsh prison regime, set free the prisoners and punish the criminals.

Flouting law and ignoring the legitimate claims of the women prisoners, the agents of the US-puppets launched a new drive of terror against the prisoners.

They sent in a big repressive force of marines and field police.

On August 22, Miss Nguyen Thi Xuan Lan, 42, an inhabitant of Son Ho, Son Tinh district, Quang Ngai province, arrested in Saigon and transferred to Thu Duc on March 3, 1968, was beaten to death.

The following day, a field police company was sent to the jail to take away her body. They savagely beat many other women prisoners.

To placate the prisoners, Lieutenant Colonel Luyen, director of Chi Hoa, and Lieutenant Colonel Son, representing the puppet military court, and the deputy director of the Thu Duc prison made a verbal promise to meet their demands, declaring that they would stop the beatings and terror and punish the murderers, abolish the salute to the Saigon flag and the harsh prison regime, and the beatings of prisoners, draw up records on the beatings resulting from the incarceration of the victims, photograph the bodies of the dead and organize their funerals.

But immediately afterwards, on August 24, the US-puppets sent in 60 cruel agents to suppress the prisoners in wards H, C and G and evacuated by force all those of ward H. They handcuffed and isolated 20 prisoners in the reception ward. Duong Ngoc Minh, the warden of Thu Duc prison, himself and his stooges set to beating up many others.

ON October 6, 1969, the spokesmen of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam issued a statement on this subject. The statement said:

"In the wake of the premeditated bombing of the Tay Ninh prison on June 19, 1969, resulting in nearly 100 inmates killed or wounded, the slaying of nearly 500 political prisoners in Poulo Condor in February and March 1969, the bloody repression of hundreds of inmates of the Tan Hiep Hoa prison (Bien Hoa) in April 1969, and tens of thousands of other bloody acts of repression in prisons all over South Viet Nam, these new crimes of the US-puppets in Thu Duc prove that the enemy are fanatically pushing up their fascist repressive measures against patriots in their hands, along with the accelerated 'Phoenix' campaign which, in fact, is a drive of intimidation and assassination against patriots and any one opposing them.

"These new crimes of the US-puppets coinciding with their intensified terror raids, the devastation of large populous areas by F-4 aircraft, and the use of war gas and noxious chemicals against civilians and crops, spell out the fact that in their death throes the US-puppets are resorting to no method however barbarous, to cow the South Viet Namese people, stave off their own collapse, and carry out the US imperialists' design to occupy and dominate South Viet Nam."

The statement affirmed:

"Determined to punish the US aggressors and their henchmen for the crimes mentioned above, the armed forces and people of South Viet Nam will deal them still more vigorous blows. We will completely defeat the US war of aggression, totally overthrow the fake puppet administration and win complete victory for the struggle to defend the nation's independence and freedom."

The statement concluded:

"The RVSN Provisional Revolutionary Government calls on all governments, all international democratic institutions, all jurists, and the peoples all over the world, including progressives in the United States, to take firm measures, for the sake of justice and humanity, to check the hands of the murderers in South Viet Nam — the US aggressors and their henchmen."

FOK its part, the DRVN Foreign Ministry issued on Oct. 8, a statement on the same subject. The statement quoted the verdict passed by the Bertrand Russell International Tribunal at its December 21, 1967 sitting in Denmark, as noting that arbitrary arrests, farcical trials, interrogations combined with repulsive torture are daily occurrences in South Viet Nam occupied zones, that killing of the wounded on the battlefield, executions without trial are also common occurrences, and that torture is applied by all means, including use of electricity, burning, beating, hanging, etc.

The statement went on to say: "Recently, an American investigation team on 'Religious and Political Freedom' in South Viet Nam made clear that under the US-puppet regime, religious and political freedom has been trampled underfoot and prisons are being crowded with more and more detainees including journalists, monks, students, teachers, tradesmen etc., whose only offence is to love their country and approve peace and neutrality."

"All those arrested by the US and its puppets, whether they are army-men or civilians, men or women, old or young, have been subjected to all sorts of torture and all sorts of physical and mental erosion and have endured a miserable life and a slow death in US-puppet prisons all over South Viet Nam."

The statement concluded:

"The ruthless suppression of the defenceless detainees by the US and its puppets has exposed the brutal nature and cowardice of the US aggressors and the incompetence and utter isolation of the traitorous Saigon puppet administration."

20th FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY
OF GDR (OCTOBER 7, 1969)

GDR, WESTERN OUTPOST OF THE SOCIALIST CAMP

THE Vietnamese people commemorated with solemnity the 20th founding anniversary of the German Democratic Republic.

On October 5, Ton Duc Thang, President of the DRVN, Le Don, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Workers' Party, Truong Chinh, President of the Standing Committee of the National Assembly, and Pham Van Dong, Premier of the DRVN, sent a congratulatory message to the German Party and State leaders.

GDR National Day was marked in Hanoi by a grand meeting, a GDR film week, an exhibition of photos and talks on the brilliant achievements of the GDR people in the building of socialism. The Voice of Viet Nam Radio and the Hanoi Press also had special features on this occasion.

On October 7, Premier Pham Van Dong, Head of the DRVN, and the German Delegation to the celebrations of the 20th founding anniversary of the

GDR, delivered in Berlin a speech greeting the glorious historic day of the brother German people:

"We hail the 20 years of growth of the GDR, glorious State of the German people, a state whose birth marked a turning point in the history of Germany, a State carrying on the finest traditions of the great German people, a State which is the symbol of the German people's bright future."

"We hail the GDR, western outpost of the socialist camp, bearer of the historic victory of the Soviet Union over the German fascists, and now a powerful force of socialism and peace, a striking example which shows the superiority of socialism in the heart of Europe."

"The Vietnamese people sincerely thank the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, the Government and people of the sister GDR for their all-out support and aid to the Vietnamese people's resistance to US aggression, for national salvation, and socialist construction."

Congratulations to China and Successful Bomb Tests

TON Duc Thang, President of the DRVN, Le Don, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Workers' Party, Truong Chinh, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the DRVN, sent on Oct. 6, a point message to the Chinese leaders greeting China's September 23 and 29, 1969, successful nuclear and hydrogen bomb tests.

The message was addressed to Mao Tse-tung, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Lin Biao, Vice-Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, and Chou En-lai, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, and read out fully as follows:

"On behalf of the Vietnamese people, the Viet Nam Workers' Party, the National Assembly and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, and in our own names, we are happy to extend to you our warmest congratulations on China's successful underground explosion of her first nuclear bomb on September 23, 1969, and of a new hydrogen bomb on September 29, 1969."

"The Vietnamese people are highly elated at these brilliant successes of the friendly Chinese people and consider them a strong encouragement to their struggle against the US aggressors, for national salvation. The Vietnamese people sincerely wish the Chinese people, under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, headed by esteemed Chairman Mao Tse-tung, many more and yet bigger achievements in the strengthening of their national defence and in the development of their modern science and technology."

"These great achievements mark the quick advance of China in the manufacture and test of nuclear weapons, making up two of the national defence of the People's Republic of China more and more powerful. The fact that China masters nuclear weapons also constitutes an important contribution to the struggle of the world people against US imperialism, for peace, national independence, democracy, and socialism."

25th Anniversary of Declaration

of Independence of Laos (October 12, 1969)

The Heroic Lao People's Struggle

2nd Anniversary of Chi's Death (Oct. 8, 1969)

The Heroic Guerilla Leader's Memory Will Never Die!

TWO years have passed by since the day Comrade Ernesto Che Guevara heroically fell in action in Bolivia (October 8, 1967).

Ernesto Che Guevara is no more, but his whole life and glorious death will shine for ever as an example of revolutionary staunchness and will inspire the Latin American and world peoples.

His example is one of unyielding struggle, of total dedication to revolution, of complete loyalty to the ideal of proletarian internationalism and independence and freedom for all peoples. Revolting against oppression and exploitation which is our time is symbolized by North American imperialism. Che was always optimistic and confident of the future, ready to lay down his life for the cause of national liberation in Latin America and in the world, the triumph of which he never doubted.

Che felt for the Vietnamese people the most affectionate sentiments. He thought highly of the fight of Viet Nam, as a most active and most revolutionary contribution to emancipation of the nations. He therefore always

maintained that the most effective and revolutionary way to support Viet Nam was to fight imperialism in all corners of the globe and create many Viet Nam's in the world.

Elaborating on this view of Che's, Premier Fidel Castro once said:

"In the minds of Che and of those who fell gloriously with him in Bolivia, among their motivations, the feeling of solidarity with the people of Viet Nam was an important factor. Thus, when they fell, it was not only for the freedom of the peoples of America; they also fell, they also shed their blood for the cause of the heroic people of Viet Nam."

The Vietnamese people will for ever treasure, graven in their hearts, the last feat of the Hero Guerilla, symbol of the staunch revolutionary spirit of the people of Cuba and Latin America, a clear manifestation of proletarian internationalism and of the internationalist militant solidarity with the Vietnamese people's fight against imperialism, for national salvation.

TWENTY-four years ago, after Allied victory over fascism, the Laotian people rose up and on October 12, 1945, proclaimed the independence of Laos. The colonial regime was abolished and the Laotian people took, on that day, the oath to make every sacrifice for their freedom. This pledge has been kept for the past twenty-four years. Closely united around the *New Lao Front* (Lao Independent Front) which became later the *New Lao Front* (Lao Patriotic Front) under the leadership of Prince Souphanouvong, the Laotian people, numbering 3 million and who shed their blood for the cause of the heroic people of Viet Nam."

The Laotian liberated areas, placed under the control of the *New Lao Front* and patriotic nationalist forces and covering two-thirds of the national territory have been developing unceasingly in the political, economic and cultural field. The people's power has been more and more consolidated. Culture and education has been expanding, agriculture and handicrafts, trading and industry has been shaping.

It is not rare to see in the liberated areas ricefields yielding from 2.5 to 3 tons per hectare. Many primary and secondary schools have been opened. In general education, teachers number 2,000 and the pupil body 50,000 or an average of one pupil for every 15 people. The living standard has risen to the benefit to the population. That explains the enthusiasm, confidence and resolve to fight and to win observable on the faces of all Laotian citizens in the liberated areas.

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Week of Solidarity with Asian Peoples
(Sept. 30 - Oct. 8, 1969)

The Revolution of Asian Peoples Will Foil All US Imperialists' New Schemes

SINCE the conclusion of World War Two, the spearhead of the US policy of aggression and intervention has been directed against Asia. But it has met with a tremendous and awakened force which possesses a tradition of staunch revolutionary struggle and has played an important role in defeating the French and British imperialists and triggered off the disintegration of the colonial system of imperialism.

This mighty force today totals 200 million people and makes up two-thirds of the world population. It has dealt staggering blows at US imperialism, the most truculent aggressor. After the triumph of the Chinese Revolution that markedly tipped the balance of power in the world in favour of the progressive forces came the splendid success of the Korean people in their defence of their Fatherland against US aggression. Today, the great achievements of the Vietnamese and Laotian peoples have frustrated the "local battle" and "special war" strategy of the US, exposed the "US irresistible strength"

myth, driven their global strategy into serious crisis and forced them to reconsider the whole of their policy. Against the backdrop of the scene of a high revolutionary tide, taking the lead in the national and democratic movement is a continuous assault on the US imperialists. From East to West, by means of armed and political struggle and other forms of action, the movement of the peoples of China, Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, South Korea and Japan, and the Palestinian Arab peoples against the US and its henchmen is surging forward with a new impetus and strength.

The Vietnamese people wish to convey their greetings of militant friendship to the peoples of the other Asian countries. Following the road charted by President Ho Chi Minh, the Vietnamese people are resolved to close their ranks and bring the fight against US aggression, for national salvation, to complete victory, thereby making an effective contribution to the Asian people's common cause against US imperialism.

CAM BINH...

(Continued from page 4)

to wounded comrades. Another young village, who also enlisted into the army, Nguyen Van Bo, has been awarded a Military Exploit medal for bravery; wounded, he refused to leave the battlefield and fought on stubbornly. For four years running, ten girls of the Binh Tam co-op have been taking turns in keeping watch on enemy planes along Highway No. 1, warning vehicle drivers with a light which, even in the fiercest rain, never went out.

Under the watchword of the "Three Responsibilities", the women of Cam Binh successfully tackle production work and combat duties, serve the armed forces efficiently and join in the fighting when necessary. They bring up their children satisfactorily. Mrs. Nguyen Lien, who is over 50 years old, has a numerous family never misses an evening class. In the days when no school was open, she sent her son, Binh, Mrs. Thanh, of the Binh Duong co-op, hired a teacher and opened a school for her own people for the whole hamlet.

The visitor's attention will not fail to be attracted by the old folks. Formerly, a number of them used to drink and gamble, but have given up alcohol, and this has greatly helped the mushrooming of five- and six-grade families that are good at implementing the govern-

ment's policies, at carrying out farm work, fighting the enemy, and practicing thrift; at educating their children; at fulfilling educational plans; and at following a civilized way of life.

And, the changes in Cam Binh have been brought about by its fine people themselves.

THE PATH FOLLOWED

AFTER the people won power in 1945, the village leader, who had with President Ho Chi Minh's teachings, attached great importance to the campaign against illiteracy.

The local Party branch launched it with these watchwords: "Let every pupil be a teacher, let illiterates teach illiterates, let literates seek out illiterates and teach them. Let illiterates seek out literates and work with them!" Barely three years after the August 1945 revolution, illiteracy was eliminated. On that day, great impetus was given to complementary education. Education slogan "Education is the key to production" was put forward. On account of the shortage of teachers the local Party branch called on primary school teachers to take elementary complementary classes as well for this they would have to work hard to raise their own level.

Later, when secondary education complementary classes were opened, the teaching staff was made up of elementary school teachers having completed a college level course. These are good number of secondary school teachers from the Cam Nuyen school, ten kilometres away. At present, it is wholly made up of Cam Binh people and looks after 25 pupils from three 8th classes, two 9th classes and one 10th class. The school has become a veritable cultural and scientific technical centre of the region.

As regards general education, the first primary school was set up in 1947. Having become gradually aware of the position and role of general education, the local Party committee gave advice and help to the teachers concerning the methods and objectives of education. It also drove home to the entire people the necessity for the masses to tackle and master educational work.

For the question of the release of captured military men, it was raised on May 19, 1969, in the 15th session of the Paris Conference by the NLF in point 9 of its demands. It was adopted by the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam and approved May 8, 1969 by the DRVN delegation in the name of the government.

Should the Nixon administration feel a real concern about the fate of the captured American soldiers, it would have accepted the above-mentioned logical and reasonable overall solution and released their liberation instead of launching a sterile and ludicrous smear campaign about the application of the 1949 convention and humanitarian norms.

The DRVN has shown great humanitarianism towards the American prisoners captured on her territory or in her territorial waters. The wounded have been given immediate medical attention

ner, regarding complementary education as the prime task, and bringing education into full play in the resistance to American aggression, for national salvation, and in the three socialist revolutions now under way in North Viet Nam: revolution in production relations, revolution in science and technology, and revolution in culture and ideology.

THE REASON OF SUCCESS

THE great achievements scored by Cam Binh are closely linked to the excellent leadership of the regime, in which every citizen is inspired by a strong will to learn science and technology so as to liquidate poverty and backwardness step by step, and bring happiness to all. They are also the result of the socialist line in education followed by our country. They work with sound by realities over the past quarter of century.

They are also the outcome of the excellent leadership of the people responsible for general and complementary education. The teachers form what may be considered a family and a team. They work with full support and assistance from the local Party branch, the government, administration and people. They are constantly fired by a revolutionary spirit. Nguyen Tien Chien, an unusual teacher, a competent elementary education teacher, has over 20 years of teaching experience, over 1,000 people to read and write, and contributed to modern agricultural techniques that she has been elected an outstanding member.

AN EMULATION MOVEMENT TO LEARN FROM AND SURPASS, CAM BINH

IN a conference to sum up the achievements of the education movement in Cam Binh, Vice Premier Le Thanh Nghi said: "The example set by Cam Binh should give a good start to a general movement over the whole North." Following the first "re-visit US aggression and save the country" conference held in 1966 by the North Vietnamese Government, North Viet Nam, the fresh breeze blows from Cam Binh which has grown into a veritable province, a number of villages are trying to build an all-sided education set up in the Cam Binh model: Phu Thi in Hanoi; An Tien in Haiphong; Tan Chau in Thinh, Ha Cat, Hai Phuc, Hai Phong, Hai Chinh, Hai Thang in Nam Ha; Hong Thang in Tan Thang; Duong, Dong Ha, Dong Phung, An Dong, Tien Dung.

The pupils have been named province, where the motto "five tons of rice per hectare" has been carried into effect, a new slogan has appeared: "Strive to attain the Two Seasons, the 100,000 tons of paddy production, and 7th class standard for all co-op members. The Hanoi area is proud in the DRVN is proud of Cam Binh, a precious pearl, and we are doing our utmost to make it prosper and all over the socialist North.

TO THE READER

We are aware that there is much room for improvement in the wording of our paper. We apologize for the shortcomings and highly appreciate all your suggestions as they will help us to serve you more efficiently in future.

The DRVN has shown great humanitarianism towards the American prisoners captured on her territory or in her territorial waters. The wounded have been given immediate medical attention

Military Operations Uncle Ho's

- ① A Big "Sweep" Beaten Off in Ben Tre Province: 500 Enemy Casualties, 11 Choppers Downed.
- ② 48 Military Vehicles and Hundreds of Adverse Troops Put out of Action in Two PLAF Ambushes, One Southeast of Saigon.
- ③ Two US Encampments Northwest of Saigon and South of 17th Parallel Stormed: 230 GIs and 33 Military Vehicles Knocked Out.

The story published below took place somewhere in the enemy-controlled area in South Viet Nam—Ed.

END) of September and beginning of October, PLAF continued to inflict severe losses on the enemy.

In Ben Tre province (mouths of the Mekong River) puppet Infantry Division 7, exhausted by a series of PLAF attacks on Sept. 1, suffered heavy setbacks on Sept. 21, 23 and 26. According to Gia Phong Press Agency, a big sweep launched by 4 companies and 4 companies of that division, backed by a puppet marine battalion, met with a stiff resistance from the PLAF in Mo Cay district, 30 km south-southeast of Saigon: the enemy took casualties and lost 11 choppers. Two battalions of Regiment 2 were heavily defeated.

The same agency reported that the PLAF had won another battle on Road No. 9 (from Ben Han to Yung Tay) about 10 km southeast of Saigon on Sept. 25: ambushed at that road, an enemy motorized column had to turn and to withdraw out of action.

Sept. 30, an enemy encampment northeast of Saigon was stormed by PLAF infantry and armored units at

km last of Dau Tieng (64 km northwest of Saigon) was stormed by the PLAF who knocked out 120 enemy troops and 22 vehicles.

In the area South of the 17th parallel, the enemy harassed in this dug-out from October 1 to 3 had 150 men disabled, 12 military vehicles destroyed and 8 aircraft shot down. Northwest of Tan Lam (Rockpile). The biggest success in that period in that sector was won on Oct. 3 near Cao Tien where the PLAF overran a US strong point: 110 GIs of Brigade 1, Airborne Division 1st, put out of action, 11 tanks and armored cars and 3 106 mm mortars wiped out.

In the Western High Plateau, Gia Phong Press Agency reported that an enemy motorized column was waylaid on Road No. 1, 27 km south of Pleiku, on October 1: the enemy took serious casualties and had at least 12 vehicles (6 tanks) destroyed.

PLAF attacks against enemy targets were most violent on Oct. 1, 5 and 7. Western agencies reported. These the HQ of US Air Force Division 3 at Long Binh,

south of DMZ and a unit of US Airborne Brigade 173 near Qui Nhon were bombed by the PLAF in the small hours of Oct. 4. The following days, at least one hundred of other targets came under fire (33 on Oct. 5, 39 on Oct. 6 and 31 on Oct. 7) including the HQ of Brigade 1, US Infantry Division 35, the HQ of Brigade 1, First Cav. Division, in Tay Ninh province, northwest of Saigon, many positions in the provinces of Cao Bang, An Giang and Bac Lieu (Mekong Delta), Binh Long (north of Saigon), Binh Thuan (east-northeast of Saigon) and Quang Nam (Southeast of Da Nang).

During that period, Western sources pointed out that PLAF infantry attacks had been made chiefly against units of US Infantry Division 25 in Tay Ninh region, US Infantry Division 1 in Binh Long, South Korean "Tiger" Division near Qui Nhon, US Infantry Division 4 near An Khe in the Western High Plateau, US Light Brigade 198 near Quang Ngai and US Airborne Division 1st near Tan Lam.

Captured American Pilots and International Law

DO XUAN SANG

US officials such as Melvin Laird, James H. Doolittle, Cabot Lodge, etc. have been lying to save the DRV with regard to captured American pilots who they claim are POWs, deprived of the benefit of the dispute over the 1949 Geneva Convention.

However, the captured pilots concerned are in no way PWs in the juridical sense of the word but ordinary criminals and, if you like, major criminals.

The captured US pilots have come and landed a sovereign country, a socialist country, with which the US is not juridically at war, and they did know it. They have destroyed schools and hospitals, killed defenceless old people, women and children to finally have their aircraft downed and land in jails, available for Vietnamese law.

Article 15 of the Geneva Convention on the high sea dated April 29, 1958, defined as piracy any unlawful act of violence committed for personal purposes by the crew of a private ship or aircraft directed on the high sea against another naval or

aircraft or against passengers or property onboard, etc.

According to Article 16 of the same convention are also pirates the crew of a warship or government aircraft who will have mutilated, got control of this ship or aircraft or have committed illegitimate acts of violence as defined in the above-mentioned Article 15.

Does it mean that should a warship or aircraft commit crimes in the name of the country and on orders of superiors, her crew would be exempt from all responsibility and punishment?

The Convention on the High Sea is silent on that score. Most luckily, this gap is filled by the general principles of positive international law.

It is known that according to Article 10 of the Statute of the Nuremberg Tribunal, aggression is an international crime. Justice Birkett, the Tribunal British member, pointed out in one of his historic statements of the trial that launching a war of aggression was not only an international crime, but the supreme

international crime, differing only from other war crimes in that it includes them all.

Of all aggressions, colonial or neo-colonial aggression is the most odious, because committed against a victim obviously weaker and incapable of giving tit for tat.

Colonial or neo-colonial aggression is of the same nature as piracy. It is in short piracy on a national scale under the national seal of the colonizing or neo-colonializing state and condemned by the resolution of the UN 13th General Assembly in 1960 on the necessity of putting an end to colonialism under all forms.

The dirty and atrocious war waged by the US government against Viet Nam without the constitutional approval of US Congress, has been defined by lawyers and peoples all over the world including progressive in the US, as a neo colonial aggressive war and a heinous international crime (see Resolution of the World Lawyers' Conference at Grenoble and decisions of the B. Russell International Tribunal).

(Continued page 7)

AFTER a successful night engagement, I lost my way in the dark in a vast garden devastated rather by an enemy sweep on the previous day than by our battle. It was pitch dark and I met nobody to ask for my way.

I remained on the look-out in a corner to wait for daylight. When it was light, a short-breathing sight offered to my view: truncated tree trunks, shell-craters and here and there completely demolished houses. Not a living soul! No barking of dogs, no twittering of birds. I came out of my hiding place and saw smoke rising from behind a bush some hundred metres away.

I went in that direction and saw a hut (it could hardly be called a hut for there remained only a roof full of holes and supported by charred poles). The mistress of the house, about thirty-five, was cooking rice. Black smoke spiralled up from wet logs. The woman stared at me all surprised by my appearance.

"What do you want?" she icily asked me.

"I am a Liberation fighter having lost my bearings after last night's engagement..."

She did not let me complete my sentence and went on in the same tone: "So you are a Viet Cong? We've received strict orders not to give you shelter, don't you know?"

It was for me a bolt from the blue. I was most disconcerted. It was possible that the local people were taught by the enemy to look such an act as I committed the fate of the woman for a while and when I saw that she looked neither wretched nor doubtful, I pulled myself together and said, "But... I am a fighter."

"I don't mind what you are, sir. Go away, or you'll get into trouble. My husband will be back soon."

"Your husband is a soldier or..."

"What did you say?" she interrupted me abruptly. "He is a hermit man, far out of here, I tell you."

I did not get out. Her anger was rather pleasant to me. I had had no doubt that my question would infuriate her; this gave me the assurance that she was a commoner I could trust. I understood her caution so vital for

those living in enemy-occupied areas; far from being offended, I took great pity on her.

I quietly came in and sat by the fire. She did nothing to prevent me from doing so. Nor did she say anything. I buckled down to undying my anapach to smother my linen soaked by last day's rain. I took special care of Uncle Ho's photo which I always kept among my papers. It was a priceless present I had received of an able fighter's congress of the patriotic liberation movement. I took it out, wiped it and had a look at it.

She had been watching every move of mine. Suddenly she drew near me, gazed at me, with tears in her eyes. She asked me in a soft and tender voice: "How did you get hold of that photo?"

Without waiting for my reply, she went on tenderly and tearfully: "Oh! Uncle Ho, beloved Uncle!"

Without even asking for my permission, she watched the photo from my hand. Picnics at the campfire. Then she helped me dry the photo and wrapped it carefully in a piece of plastic.

From then on, she was full of attention for me, asking me whether I was hungry, where my family lived, etc. I had no my only what was my latest news about Uncle Ho... She called me "brother" instead of "Sir."

"You will have a meal with us, won't you, brother?" she said. "I'm so sorry I was rude to you. I understand me and don't be afraid of anything. Stay with us until evening, we'll show you the way..."

Her husband came home a few hours later.

As he knew that I had Uncle Ho's portrait on me, he asked me to let him see it and insisted on touch on keeping it as a gift from me, saying, "You've had it for a long time. And besides, your mates also have similar pictures. Here we have allies; I been longing to have one like that."

With a regret mingled with pride, I complied with his wish. Like a child, he jumped for joy and pressed the photo against his chest, exclaiming: "I'll never part with this treasure!"